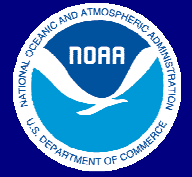


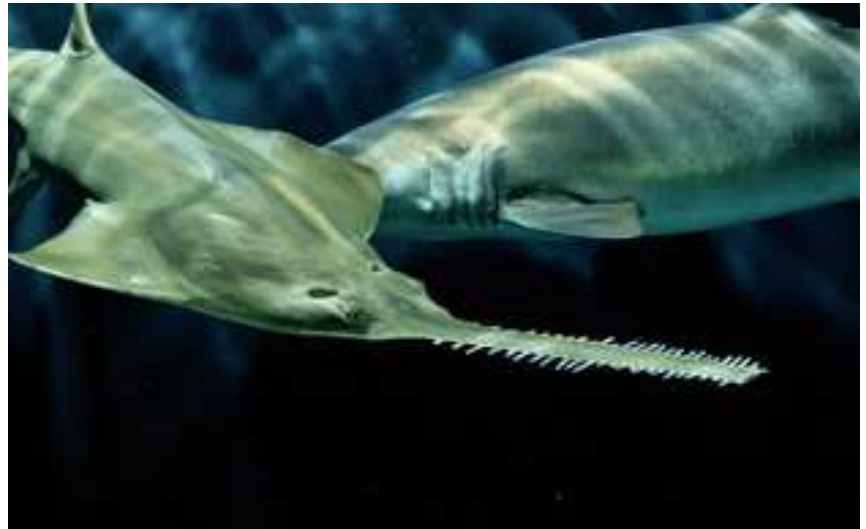
National Marine Fisheries Service



Species of Concern Proactive Conservation

What is a “Species of Concern”?

A “Species of Concern” is a species or vertebrate population for which there is concern or great uncertainty about its status. Species of Concern are not listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and are not protected by the ESA. As resources permit, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) conducts a review of the status of each Species of Concern to determine if it warrants listing as an endangered or threatened species under the ESA. NMFS believes it is important to highlight species that could benefit from proactive conservation efforts.



Sawfish and Sand Tiger Shark
Southeast Region Species of Concern.



Opossum Pipefish

Species of Concern Facts

Program Start Date: 2004

Current Number of
Species of Concern: 42

FY 2007 Grant Funds
disbursed: \$490,000

What are the Species of Concern Program Goals?

The goals of the Species of Concern Program are:

- To increase public awareness about these species;
- To identify those species potentially at risk and in need of protective measures before listing under the ESA becomes necessary;
- To identify data deficiencies and uncertainties associated with the status of the species;
- To work cooperatively with regional co-managers and interest groups to obtain the information necessary to evaluate species status and threats;
- To identify conservation opportunities; and,
- To work proactively with Federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, and the public to conserve the species.



Speckled Hind



Nassau Grouper

What Species of Concern Occur in the Region?

- Alabama Shad
- Atlantic Sturgeon
- Dusky Shark
- Ivory Bush Coral
- Key silverside
- Largetooth Sawfish
- Mangrove Rivulus
- Nassau Grouper
- Night Shark
- Opossum Pipefish
- Riverherring
- Saltmarsh Topminnow
- Speckled Hind
- Sand Tiger Shark
- Striped Croaker
- Warsaw Grouper
- White Marlin

Program Accomplishments

- SOC's will now be included as indicator species in the National Marine Sanctuaries program and in the Sanctuaries Encyclopedia
- NMFS' Habitat Protection Division agreed to collaborate with their CHPPs conservation program and HC2 offered to help fund some ongoing SOC grant projects
- Over 250 people were introduced to the program through outreach
- 3 conferences were held in 2007
- Multiple status reviews and research projects of NMFS staff were funded internally with \$180,000 in program funds

For Further Information

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What are the Criteria for Identifying Species of Concern?

- Abundance and productivity:
 - Magnitude of decline – combination of recent rate of decline and historical extent of decline
 - Natural rarity – species known only from a few specimens or that occurs rarely and in small numbers
 - Endemism – species or population that is native to a particular place and is only found there
- Distribution:
 - Population connectivity – level of reproductive exchange among related populations
 - Limited geographic range – found in a limited area
 - Endemism – species or population that is native to a particular place and is only found there
- Life-history characteristics:
 - Vulnerable life-history strategies – e.g., low fecundity, late age at maturity, slow growth rates
 - Resilience to environmental variability and catastrophes
 - Loss of unique life-history traits
- Threats:
 - Extraction – permanently removes the species from its habitat
 - Habitat degradation and loss – destruction, modification, or loss to a species' habitat that could result in a lower carrying capacity
 - Disease and predation – can influence the abundance and productivity of a species or population
 - Other natural or man-made factors for decline: includes ocean conditions and poor hatchery practices